SERMON

Preached in the

Parish-Church

OF

St. *PHILIP* and *JACOB*,

IN THE

City of Briſtol,

ON

Wedneſday the 15th of *July*, 1691.

BEING THE

MONTHLY-FAST.

By *THOMAS CARY*, M. A. Vicar of the Pariſh of St. *Philip* and *Jacob*, in the City of *Briſtol*.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

To the Right Honourable, *Charles* Earl of *Macclesfield*, Viſcount and Baron of *Brandon*, Lord Preſident, and Lord Lieutenant of the Principality of *Wales*, and Lord Lieutenant of the Counties of *Glouceſter*, *Hereford*, and *Monmouth*, and of the City and County of *Briſtol*; and one of the Lords, of Their Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.

My Lord,

YOUR *Approbation of this Sermon, when it came from the Pulpit, gives me Confidence to Preſent it to your Lordſhip, now it comes from the*

the Press, what had the Honour of your Acceptation when it was Private, humbly claims your Patronage now it is Publick; I should not however Presume to Prefix your Lordships great Name to this mean Discourse, did not your Goodness dispose you to accept of a mean Offering, especially when it comes as the Expression of a grateful Heart; although I am sensible, your Lordship is so far from being taken with Flattery, that you cannot bear to hear your Due; yet I cannot but Congratulate your Lordships hearty Zeal, and indefatigable Industry, in that high Orb, in which you Act, for the Support of that Government, which God by a Train of Remarkable Providences hath Established among us!

May

The Epiſtle Dedicatory.

May your Lordſhip Live, to ſee it fixt upon ſuch ſolid Foundations, that it may never ſo much as ſhake, much leſs tumble down.

My Lord, I have one Advantage by this Dedication, which I confeſs I am fond of; that is, an Opportunity to give your Lordſhip a publick Acknowledgment, for the great Obligations you have laid on me, and to let the World know how much I value my ſelf on the Character of

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips

Moſt humble Servant,

and Chaplain,

Thomas Cary.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

EZRA IX. 13, 14.

And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve, and haſt given us ſuch deliverance as this.

Should we again break thy commandments, and joyn in affinity with the people of theſe abominations? wouldeſt not thou be angry with us till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?

THE words are a part of *Ezra*'s Prayer, the time when he Prayed was after the return of the *Jews* from the Captivity in *Babylon*, and the free Exerciſe of their Religion, after

the ſecond Temple was finiſhed; the deliverance here mentioned, is their liberty to return and to ſet up God's publick Worſhip in *Jeruſalem*; the Sins he here mourns for, and prayeth God to Pardon, are the Idolatry of the *Jews*, and their Intermarriages with the *Heathens*, after God had given them ſo great a deliverance.

This good Man feared the Conſequence of their great Ingratitude, he ſaw God's end fruſtrated, and therefore expected greater Judgments; he obſerved no Reformation after ſuch a ſignal Providence, and therefore had juſt Reaſon to believe, that God would bring them back again into that Captivity, out of which they lately eſcaped. He acknowledgeth it is but fit, that God ſhould inflict more ſevere Judgments, when his Mercies do not draw to obedience, the deſign of the whole, is to perſwade the *Jews* to Repentance and Reformation, as a ſuitable return to a gracious God, for their late Deliverance.

The

The words contain theſe five Propoſitions:

1. That Sin is the cauſe of all the Miſeries that do befal the Church and People of God; *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great treſpaſs.*

2. That God doth not puniſh his Church and People, according to the Merit of their Sins; *Seeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.*

3. That the Deliverances of the Church and People of God come from him; *and haſt given us ſuch Deliverance as this.*

4. That great Deliverances do call for great Reformation, by way of Thankfulneſs and Gratitude; *This is implyed throughout the whole:*

5. That Diſobedience after a great Deliverance, doth highly provoke God to inflict more terrible Judgments.

Should we again break thy Commandments, and joyn in affinity with the people of theſe abominations? wouldeſt thou not be angry with us till thou had'ſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?

I ſhall all along apply theſe Heads, in order to perſwade Men to Repentance and Reformation, for the great Deliverance, we of this Nation have lately received.

1. That Sin is the cauſe of all the Miſeries that do befall the Church and People of God; *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great treſpaſs.*

It was Sin, that carried the two Tribes Captive into *Babylon* for ſeventy Years, deſtroyed their City and Temple, ſlew their Princes and Nobles, and laid their Country deſolate.

deſolate. Zedekiah *did that which was evil in the ſight of the Lord his* God, *and humbled not himſelf before* Jeremiah *the prophet, ſpeaking from the mouth of the Lord; he ſtiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of* Iſrael: *Moreover, all the chief of the prieſts, and the people tranſgreſſed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the houſe of the Lord which he had allowed in* Jeruſalem: *Therefore he brought upon them the King of the* Chaldees, *who ſlew their young men with the ſword, in the houſe of their ſanctuary, and had no compaſſion on young man or maiden, old man, or him that ſtooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.* 2 Chron. 36. 12, 13.

All theſe evils came upon the Church of the two Tribes, *for their evil deeds and for their great treſpaſs*, for their Idolatry in Worſhipping ſtrange Gods, for their immoral Practices, in living worſe then the *Heathen*, for the corruption of their Hearts, and prophaneneſs of their Lives.

And

And now to apply this home to our ſelves; It was for the Sins of this Nation, that we were brought ſo near unto Deſtruction, God ſhook his Rod over us, to ſhew us what Puniſhment our Sins deſerved, although in Mercy he did not lay the Ax to the Root of the Tree; it was for contempt of God's Word and Worſhip, for prophaning his Holy Day, diſhonouring his ſacred Name, by Cuſtomary Swearing and Curſing, for Drunkenneſs, Adultery, Pride, and Diſſolute living, that we were likely to looſe our Religion, our Liberties, and our Properties; we deſerved theſe Judgments as much as ever the *Jews* did their ſeventy Years Captivity in *Babylon*; the more reaſon then have we to praiſe God for our late Deliverance: This brings me to the ſecond Particular.

2. That God doth not puniſh his Church and People according to the Merit of their Sins; *Seeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.*

God

God temper's Mercy and Judgment together, he doth not proportion the Stripes to the Offence, he Corrects in Love, when he might juſtly Deſtroy in Wrath: the obſtinate *Jews* deſerved, that God ſhould utterly forſake them, their Sins cryed for a longer Captivity then of ſeventy Years; but it pleaſed God to reſtore them again to their Native Country, and to erect a ſecond Temple for his publick Worſhip: *Yet many years did'ſt thou forbear them, and teſtifiedſt againſt them by thy ſpirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gaveſt thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. Neverthleſs, for thy great mercies ſake, thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them; for thou art a Gracious and a Merciful God.* Neh. 9.30,31.

And now to apply this to ourſelves; God hath certainly puniſhed us leſs then our Sins deſerve; it was not for any Righteouſneſs in us, that God hath ſo Graciouſly delivered us, for we are a Rebellious and an Unthankful

thankful People, our Sins were clamorous for greater Judgments then thoſe, from which God hath in Mercy reſcued us, God may juſtly ſay to us, as heretofore to the *Jews: Not for your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of Iſrael.*

Ezek. 36. 32.

God hath ſpared us to magnifie his Grace in our Deliverance, he hath miraculouſly preſerved us, to Demonſtrate to the Antichriſtian World, that we profeſs his true Religion, although we do not live up to it; it was more for the Sins of the *Papiſts*, then for the Righteouſneſs of the *Proteſtants*, that God ſo providentially Appeared for us.

O what great Reaſon have we then to celebrate God with Praiſes! O how thankful ſhould we be for this unexpected Deliverance! God hath done great Things for us, and ſhall not we rejoyce in God? He hath Magnified his Mercy, and ſhall not we Admire

Admire his Love? *O give Thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: becauſe his mercy endureth for ever. Let Iſrael now ſay, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the houſe of Aaron now ſay, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord ſay, that his mercy endureth for ever.* Pſal. 118. 1, 2, 3.

That the Deliverances of the Church and People of God come from Him; *and haſt given us ſuch deliverance as this.*

The return of the *Jews* from their Captivity in *Babylon*, was God's Act; he put it into the Heart of *Cyrus*, to iſſue out his Proclamation to rebuild *Jeruſalem*, and to Erect there a Temple to the Lord; God brought them down to *Babylon*, and brought them up again.

And thus our Deliverance from two intolerable Evils, Popery in the Church, and Slavery in the State, is God's Work; we may truly ſay of it, what the *Magicians* of *Ægypt* did of the unimitable Miracle, *this*

is the Finger of God; we have great reaſon to apply the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *this is the Lord's doing*, *it is marvellous in our eyes.*

Pſal. 118. 23.

If ever any Deliverance had plain Characters, of a remarkable Providence ſtampt upon it, this hath; God ſo managed the whole, that every one may diſcern his Hand in it, that doth not affect wilful Blindneſs, it was ſo contrived in every part of it, it came in ſuch a time of Extremity, and was brought about by ſuch Unlikely and Improbable means, all things did ſo Conſpire together for the good of this Church and State, that if ever God hath wrought Miracles in any Age, ſince that of the Apoſtles, then was the time.

Let us not then impute our Deliverance to Chance and Fortune, or to our own Wiſdom and Endeavours, or to the Policy and Craft of States-men, or to the renowned Inſtrument of it, that Illuſtrous Prince (whom God hath in Mercy to us, Exalted

to

to the Throne) but wholly to the Providence of the Almighty: Let us ſay with *Daniel*, *Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever: for wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and the ſeaſons: he removeth kings, and ſetteth up kings: he giveth wiſdom unto the wiſe, and knowledge to them that know underſtanding: He revealeth the deep and ſecret things: he knoweth what is in darkneſs, and the light dwelleth with him.* Dan. 2. 20, 21.

Here certainly we may apply the Words in the Song of *Moſes*; *How ſhould one chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight, except their Rock had ſold them, and the Lord had ſhut them up? For their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themſelves being judges,* Deut. 32. 30, 31.

Let us then regard God, as the ſole Author of our Preſervation; let us not ſo much conſider ſecond Cauſes as the original Cauſe; let us conclude this Point, with the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*: *If it had not been the* Pſal. 124. *Lord* 1, 2.

Lord, who was on our ſide, may Iſrael now ſay: If it had not been the Lord who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us: Then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us.

That great Deliverances do call for great Reformation, by way of Thankfulneſs and Gratitude; *This is implied throughout the whole.*

Beloved Brethren, the late Deliverance of this Nation, is Great and Remarkable, it ſhould not only be Recorded in our Chronicles, but Written on our Hearts; he that hath no ſenſe of it, hath no regard for God or Religion; it deſerves to be Proclaimed with the lowdeſt Praiſes, our Hearts and Lives ſhould concur together, to demonſtrate our Gratitude for it.

God intends his Mercies, as Obligations to Obedience, they are Arguments very proper, to work on all that have any Ingenuity. Let us then live up unto that holy

Religion

Religion God hath preſerved among us; now being delivered out of the Hands of our Enemies, let us ſerve our God, with humble and obedient Hearts; now we are ſecured from the Fears of Popery, let us live as doth become the Proteſtant Profeſſion.

Let us not be more zealous for the Rites and Ceremonies of Religion, then for the Subſtantial and Indiſpenſible Duties of it; let us not waſte our Zeal upon Triffles that cannot profit or edifie Souls, and in the mean time looſe thoſe eſſential Graces, without which we cannot be ſaved; let us not contend about the Shell and part with the Kernel, the Life and Spirit of Chriſtianity, the Love of God and our Neighbour, let us all endeavour to exceed one another, in practiſing the ſubſtantial Duties of Piety, Juſtice, Sobriety, and Charity, and then we ſhall not differ much about indifferent Things.

Peace

Peace and Unity, are the Glory of a Chriſtian Church; this excellent Character is given of the Primitive and Pureſt:
Acts 4. 32. *The multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one ſoul:* Love is the inſeparable Badge, of a true Diſciple of
John 13 35. Chriſt. *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another.*

Internal Holineſs, is abſolutely neceſſary
Heb. 12. 14. to Salvation, becauſe *without it no man ſhall ſee the Lord*; let us then live in Peace, love one another, and honour the Goſpel with holy Lives, and then we ſhall anſwer God's end, in our great Deliverance: when God promiſeth Bleſſings to his People, he foretels them what Returns he expects; *then*
Ezek. 36. 31. *ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*

Let

Let us conſider the greatneſs of our Deliverance, that we may underſtand what Obligations are laid upon us, to Repentance and Reformation.

God hath preſerved us from Captivity, under a myſtical *Babylon*, from the *Roman* Yoke, a Burthen ſo Intolerable, that neither we or our Fathers were able to bear it, we are ſecured from *Ægyptian* darkneſs, and all thoſe Oppreſſions the faithful People of God would meet with in that Land.

We are Delivered from a Church, whoſe Doctrines contradict common Senſe, the moſt evident Principles of Reaſon, the plain Rules of Morality, and the known Laws of Chriſt; a Church that Magiſterially impoſeth upon mens Conſciences, makes as many new Articles of Faith as it pleaſeth, and bindes all under the Penalty of Damnation, to an implicite Faith and Obedience to all its Decrees and Rules.

A Church that pretends to an Universal Monarchy, to have Power to disposse of all the Kingdoms of the World, to pardon Sins by Absolution, and to give leave to Sin, by Dispensations.

A Church Idolatrous in the Worshipping of Images; the Adoration of a piece of Bread; the Invocation of Saints and Angels, and veneration of holy Relicks and Crucifixes.

A Church that would Rob you of one half of the Sacrament, take one of the Commandments out of the Moral Law, deprive you of the holy Scriptures, *the Key of Knowledge*, impose Prayers in an Unknown Tongue, and take much pains to increase Ignorance (as they call it) the Mother of Devotion.

A Church that teacheth Doctrines not known in Scripture, that choke's Religion with numerous and inſignificant Ceremonies, and incourageth Sin by Pardons, Indulgences, eaſie Penances, and Diſpenſations.

A Church whoſe Principles are Inconſiſtent with Human Society, and whoſe Religion is as bad as none at all; becauſe it indulgeth Sin, gratifies Carnality, and makes Internal Holineſs unneceſſary.

A Church made up of Fraud and Cruelty; whoſe Arguments to propagate their Faith are Priſons, Fagots, and Miſſionary Dragoons, that keeps no Faith with ſuch as they call Hereticks, and think's it a meritorious Act to deſtroy them.

A Church that allow's the moſt wicked Methods, to carry on its own bad Cauſe, among whom Murtherers, are reputed Saints; and Men of Blood have their Names in their Rubricks.

A Church that would in time, have devoured your Eſtates, ſeized your Lands, corrupted your Blood, and inſlaved you in Soul and Body.

Bleſſed be God, that he hath preſerved us from ſuch a Church, he ſuffered Popery to come to the Doors of our Churches, but would not permit it to enter in; he ſuffered our Enemies to make a great Progreſs, and then blaſted all in a Moment; *he delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we truſt, that he will yet deliver us.*

2 Cor. 1. 10.

That Diſobedience after a great Deliverance, doth highly provoke God to inflict more terrible Judgments: *Should we again break thy commandments, and joyn in affinity with the people of theſe abominations? would'ſt thou not be angry with us, till thou had'ſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping.*

God hath indeed been very Gracious unto us, he expects an impartial Reformation from all orders and degrees of Men among us, his Mercies ſhould ingage us to walk more Humbly and Religiouſly.

But if God's end is fruſtrated, if his Mercies are abuſed, if we ſtill diſhonour our Holy Religion, by ungodly Practices, then the Mercy of God will be converted into fury, he will Deliver us no more, but caſt us off for Ever.

It was a lasting aggravation of the Sins of the *Jews*, that they rebelled against that God, who had brought them out of the Land of *Ægypt*, and from the House of Bondage; it was a great aggravation of *Davids* Sin, that God had done such and such things for him, and yet he offended in the matter of *Uriah*: it was an aggravation of King *Solomon*'s Sins, that he forsook that God who had Appeared to him twice; and it will be a terrible Aggravation of our Sins, that such a great Mercy, such a wonderful Deliverance hath not reduced us to Obedience; God may justly say to us, as he did to the Incorrigible *Jews*;

Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

Let us not think our selves past all Danger, let us not put far from us an evil Day. Alas! they are never safe, who are secure in their Sins; he who hath Miraculously Delivered us at one time, can easily Destroy

us

us at another, if we Repent not.

O let every one take up the Reſolution of Holy *David*, *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments:* let us all anſwer as the Children of *Iſrael* did *Joſhua*; *The Lord our God will we ſerve, and his voice will we obey.* Pſal. 119. 106. Joſh. 24. 24.

God by his Providence ſpeaks now to us, as once unto the *Jews*; *O that there were ſuch an heart in them that they would fear me and keep my commandments always that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Iſrael had walked in my ways! I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their Enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries.* Deut. 5. 29. Pſal. 81. 13. 14.

I ſhall conclude all with the Profeſſion and Exhortation of *Samuel*, *Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the Lord, in ceaſing to pray for you: but I will* 1 Sam. 12. 23, 24.

will teach you the good and the right way. Onely fear the Lord and ſerve him in truth, with all your heart, for conſider how great things he hath done for you, but if ye ſhall ſtill do wickedly, ye ſhall be conſumed both ye and your king.

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be Honour, Praiſe, Love, and Adoration, henceforth, and for ever more.

FINIS.